

**Freetown Cemetery Commission**  
Minutes of the Wednesday, August 31, 2011 Meeting  
Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, Assonet, Mass.

**Present:** Adrienne Levesque and Mike McCue.

**Absent:** Keven Desmarais.

**Call to order:** Chairman Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 6:45p.

**Meeting Postponed**

The meeting, originally scheduled for Monday, August 29th, had been postponed to Wednesday, August 31st due to Hurricane Irene.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of previous meetings were not available.

**Appointment of Superintendent**

Due to Mr. Desmarais' absence, this item was passed over to be voted on at the next meeting where all commissioners are present.

**Assonet Burying Ground**

Mr. McCue reported on the rearrangement, repair, and replacement of various headstones. He stated the headstone which was to be moved in Section 15 has not yet been moved, and that it is expected that it will be moved when the headstone that will replace it is prepared and installed. He also reported Albanese Monuments has agreed to repair additional headstones, but has not been contacted yet pending replacement of the computer on which the relevant files are stored. The cost for replacing the two shattered stones with one flat stone was reported as approximately \$500.00, and will be made a "low priority" item on account of its cost.

Discussion on the acquisition and placement of a flagpole was passed over as Mr. Desmarais was absent. Also, a brief discussion was held on the concept for a veterans' monument, but no action was taken.

Mr. McCue also reported approaching Dave Cass to survey the perimeter of the cemetery and create new maps showing newer sections near the highway. Mr. Cass thanked the commission for contacting him, but stated he has now fully retired. He will make his information and data available to whoever may succeed him. He offered to recommend several people he has worked with if the commission is unable to find a surveyor. Mr. McCue suggested first contacting Tom Daley, as he is a town resident and owns a lot in the cemetery. Mrs. Levesque concurred, and it was agreed on consensus to approach Mr. Daley first before broadening the search.

For historical interest, it was noted that late Commissioner B. F. Aiken created the first known plan of the cemetery in 1897, which is now in the custody of the Freetown Historical Society. This was followed by a revision in 1932 by Commissioner Benjamin R. Evans, who died in 1979. Mr. Cass has been preparing and updating the plans since at least 1978.

Also noted was the delivery earlier in the day of the new lawnmower to be used by the Highway Department in mowing the cemetery. The mower is being leased for three years at a cost of \$4,052.80 per year.

**East Freetown Cemetery**

A brief discussion was held on the acquisition of a sign or other marker for the entrance to the cemetery. It was noted Mr. Desmarais had previously suggested a boulder, and consensus was reached that the matter be

left with Mr. Desmarais provided he could locate a boulder to be purchased, placed, and carved for \$250.00 or less.

A notation was also made that the Hog Lane sign has yet to be placed in its new location.

### **Evans Cemetery**

Mr. McCue suggested that the driveway to the Evans Cemetery be crack-sealed the next time the Highway Surveyor has crack-sealing work done in town. He felt there were sufficient funds in the cemetery's perpetual care account to cover the cost. It was agreed on consensus to have the work done.

### **Haskins Cemetery**

No progress has been made toward cleaning the cemetery or securing a permanent means of access.

### **Michael Hathaway Burying Ground**

Discussion will be held at a future time regarding whether to approach the two estates with ownership interests in this cemetery to work toward consolidating the title.

### **Mother's Brook Cemetery**

It was noted that the DeMoranvilles have begun maintaining the cemetery and appear to be doing a fine job.

### **Monetary Issues**

Monetary issues related to the Chace, Morton, and Nichols cemeteries were discussed.

- **Chace:** A number of messages were received in July and early August relating to the Chace Cemetery not being mowed. All callers were informed that the Chace Cemetery is a private cemetery with an active association, and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the Cemetery Commission.

Mr. Desmarais submitted a question regarding the perpetual care account for this cemetery. Mr. McCue explained that the Chace Cemetery is the only cemetery for which the town holds and expends funds without authorization from the Cemetery Commission. While bills for the Evans, Morton, and Rounsevell cemeteries, as examples, are submitted to the Cemetery Commission for payment, bills for the Chace Cemetery are not. He hypothesized that this could be because until 2008, a majority of the town's cemetery commissioners were also involved in the Chace Cemetery.

Since the Chace Cemetery Association has not approached the town to express hardship or ask for assistance, it was determined that no action was warranted or could be taken.

- **Morton:** The finances of the Morton Cemetery were reviewed. This cemetery is roughly the same size as the Evans Cemetery, but has an endowment that is approximately ten per cent of that of the Evans Cemetery. As a result, the Morton Cemetery is frequently without adequate funds for its maintenance. It was agreed to try and raise interest in contributing to the endowment for this cemetery, which has not seen a contribution since before the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989.
- **Nichols:** It was noted that the town appropriated \$330.00 for the maintenance of veterans' graves in this cemetery, and that there is still a need to raise the additional \$3,170.00 toward the cost of its restoration.

### **Hurricane Irene**

Mr. McCue provided information on how the cemeteries fared in the storm of previous weekend. While not all cemeteries were visited before the meeting, information was available as follows:

- Assonet Burying Ground had trees down across the driveway and debris strewn about in Section 1. The Highway Department removed the trees crossing the driveway on Monday morning.
- Dr. Braley Cemetery had a limb down across its access pathway, but the limb was removed on Monday afternoon, presumably by neighbors.
- Evans Cemetery has trees down across the driveway and limbs down in the cemetery. Tom Copeland has agreed to remove the trees and limbs during the regularly-scheduled maintenance of that cemetery over the coming weekend.
- Friends Cemetery is to be evaluated on September 1st.
- Mother's Brook Cemetery has a tree down along the rear tree line. There is also a very large tree down within the cemetery itself. Mr. DeMoranville will be asked to remove the trees if he is able.
- Reynolds Cemetery has a tree down in the middle of the cemetery which appears to be resting on a headstone. Andy Simmons will be informed to pass this information along to the Pittsleys.
- Richmond Cemetery sustained no damage or debris.
- Winslow Cemetery has numerous limbs down in the front field where there are no graves. Mr. DeMoranville will be asked to remove these along with a tree from which several fallen limbs originated. Another tree, outside the cemetery property, will be evaluated, and the property owners will be asked for their consent to remove the tree if it is deemed appropriate.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

Upon motion of Mrs. Levesque, duly seconded by Mr. McCue, the commission voted to adjourn at 7:50p. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael T. McCue, Chairman